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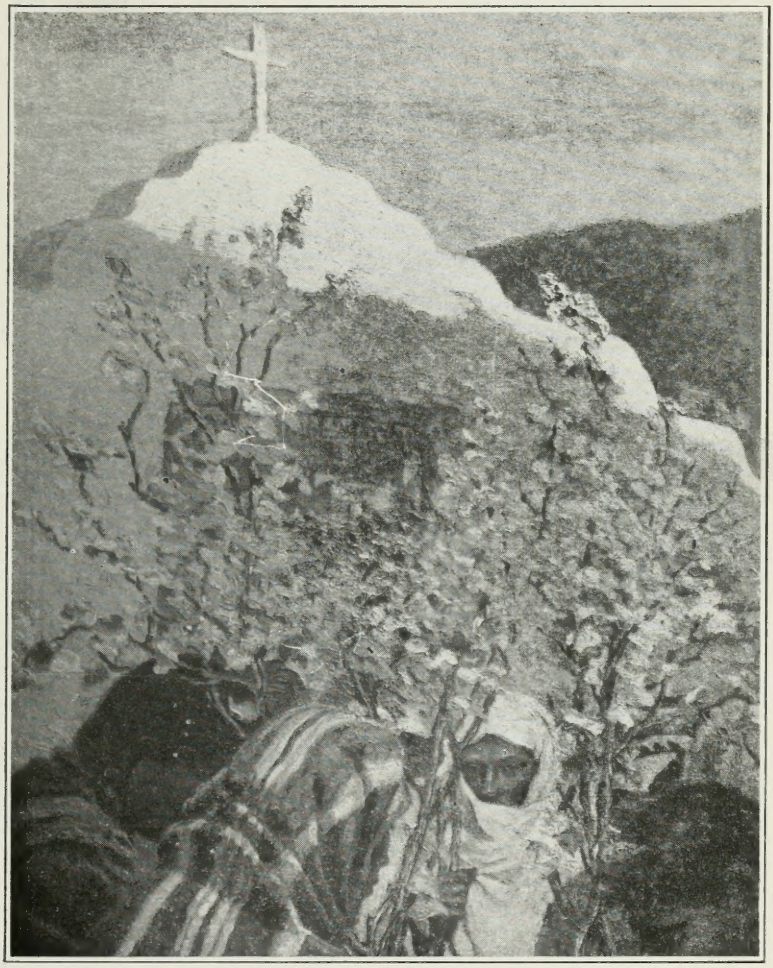

From Painting by MISS BLANCHE GRANT

SUN DOWN DANCE AT TAOS

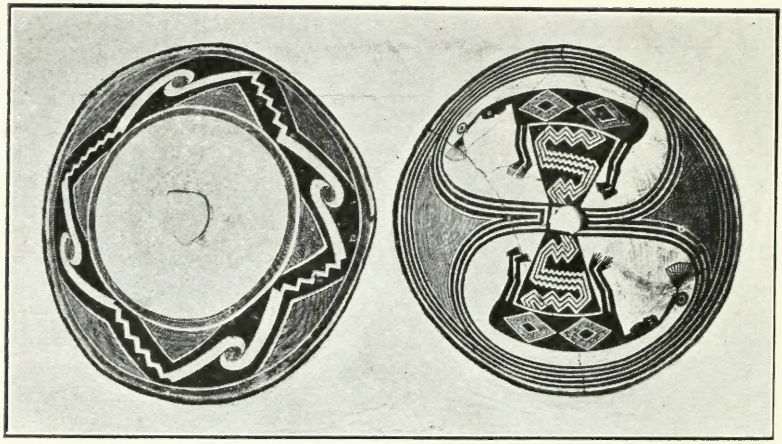

Fig. 1. Mimbres Bowls.

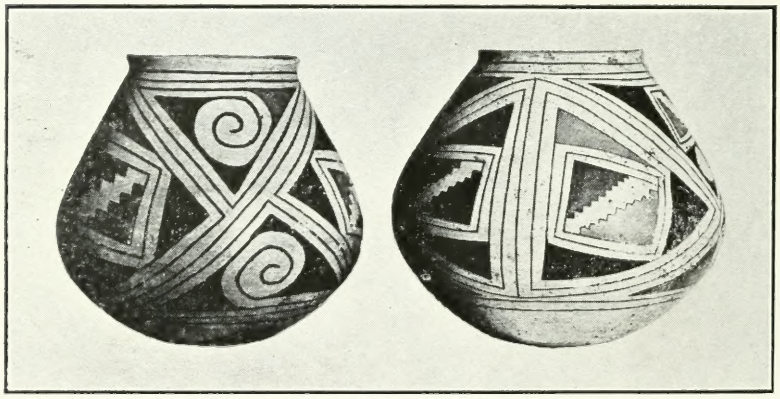

Fig. 2. Casas Grandes Jars.

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF SOUTHWESTERN NEW MEXICO

During January and February, 1922, three members of the staff of the Museum of New Mexico: Lansing B. Bloom, Wesley Bradfield and Kenneth M. Chapman, began a preliminary survey of the archaeology of southwestern New Mexico.

Its purpose was to determine in as far as possible, within the five days available for the work, the nature and extent of the ancient culture or cultures of the Mimbres Valley and of adjacent portions of the Gila and Rio Grande Valleys in Grant, Luna and Sierra Counties.

The archaeology of these portions of the Gila and Rio Grande Valleys has received but the merest mention. That of the Mimbres Valley, however, has received more attention, as will be noted in the accompanying bibliography. In view of all that has been written on the subject, it may seem that little could be added to our knowledge by spending only a few days in the field. But a careful reading of these reports shows that there is yet much to be learned by a systematic search for certain facts that have been almost completely overlooked in the past, not only by amateurs, whose zeal in recording their observations is most commendable, but also by men who have devoted a lifetime to archaeological research.

The architecture of the ancient Mimbres culture has received much consideration from several writers, but until systematic excavation is undertaken at various sites, it is doubtful whether any knowledge of ground plans or construction can be gained that will be of weight in determining the relation of the Mimbres to that of adjacent culture areas. It is believed that environment will prove to be largely accountable for the varied use of such building material as adobe, rough rubble, flat sandstone slabs, or timbers which appear at various sites. Even a rough survey of each site recorded in a sketch plan would have consumed more time than was available for the entire survey. Therefore, beyond making note of the location, the comparative size, building material and present condition of each communal ruin, and the photographing of the more important of these, no attempt was made to cover this phase of the subject.

One fact, however, which we hoped to establish by even so brief a preliminary survey, was that of a meeting or overlapping of two or more cultures; the Mimbres, the Casas Grandes of Chihuahua, and perhaps a third from the Gila area to the northwest. There are suggestions of this complicated cultural contact in the reports of Bandelier, Hough and Fewkes, but they are so vague and conjectural as to be of little value. It was considered absolutely necessary therefore to discard all such information and to rely alone on personal observation. Systematic field work in the northern half of New Mexico had led us to believe that a safe index as to the uniformity or complexity of the Mimbres culture area could best be obtained by an extensive collection of the potsherds, with which the mounds of each pueblo ruin are strewn. Pottery, and especially decorated ware, has long been recognized as one of the best means for the study

of cultural relations, and experience has shown that shards collected from the surface of a ruin afford a fairly reliable clue as to the character of pottery that may be found by excavation.

The greater part of five days, therefore, was spent in the collecting of shards from twenty nine sites. The material from each site was carefully sacked and labeled, and the entire collection was shipped to the Museum in Santa Fe. Here the finds from each site have been sorted and counted and the results tabulated for comparison with the finds from every other site. Shards of undecorated ware, classed as either coiled or smooth, and that bearing incised decoration, were found in varying quantities at all sites, and were not included in the count, which was limited to various types of pottery bearing painted decoration.

The distribution of seven types of decorated ware and their relative abundance are shown in Table 1, which records the findings at thirteen sites, of which eight are in the Mimbres, four in the Gila, and one in the Rio Grande area.

Description and Distribution of Types

Type 1.

It will be noticed that No. 1 is seldom found. Until this type is brought to light by excavation, it may be passed over as having little weight in determing cultural contacts. For instance, the recovery of whole pots or of shards large enough to show the system of decoration might prove it to be either a distinctly local product, or to resemble closely the red ware of either the Little Colorado River area or of Casas Grandes, Chihuahua.

Type 2.

This ware, represented by only a few shards, found at a site where Gila polychrome ware predominates, resembles very closely specimens from sites near Fort Apache, Arizona.[1]

Type 3.

This appears to be a distinctly localized product. It will be noticed that it is found in varying quantities only at sites within the Mimbres area, where it is associated chiefly with types 4, 6 and 7.

Type 4.

The shards indicate ollas of black on white ware, with smooth exterior and rough scraped interior surface. They resemble, both in quality, finish and decoration, shards of ollas from small house sites throughout much of the ancient Pueblo area. The occurrence of this comparatively crude black on white ware at the same sites with shards of Mimbres bowls of much finer finish and decoration is quite puzzling, and more so when we note that their proportion is much greater at sites where they are found with types 6 and 7.

Type 5.

Shards of Mimbres black on white bowls (fig. 1.) described and figured by Fewkes[2] (figs. 13 to 15, inc., and 17 to 32, inc., as well as Plates 1 to 8, inc.) Fewkes' description of the decoration of this ware is inadequate. He fails to note what must have been apparent in many

of the specimens, that the color of the decoration is not always uniform, but varies, sometimes in a single specimen, from a dense black to a red brown, or even brick red. This variation in color is apparently due to unevenness of heat in firing and not to a variation in the properties of the pigment itself. One bowl in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Cosgrove of Silver City shows not only the complete gradation of color in the pigment from red to black, but also has a smudged spot at the red side, at which the pigment has been burned to a near-glaze. This would suggest that black was produced by a comparatively low degree of heat and that various shades from red brown to red were produced by a much higher temperature.[3] It would be instructive also to determine whether bowls, misshapen by overfiring, usually bear the red decoration. If so, this would be additional proof of the red having been produced at high temperature.

This variance in color is found in the decoration on Mimbres bowl shards from each site, not only in the Mimbres, but also in the Gila and Rio Grande areas. From this, it would appear that, even if the degree of heat used in firing pottery were under control, there was no localized preference for firing the decoration to either the black or red stage. It would seem therefore that the term "black on white" should still be used for the Mimbres bowls, but qualified with a description of the exact tone or the variance in tone of the pigment of each bowl.

This preliminary survey shows shards of Mimbres black on white bowls predominating in the collections from the San Vicente and Upper Mimbres regions, as well as from three sites in the Gila and one in the Rio Grande areas. Their complete absence is noted at two of the

Lower Mimbres sites. At a third they comprise only 10% of all decorated shards. But it must not be inferred from this that Mimbres pottery is not to be found farther south than the vicinity of Deming. Fewkes states that one of the two sites which yielded the majority of specimens figured in his report is the Osborn Ruin, twelve miles south of Deming and four miles west of the Florida Mountains.

Shard collections from this and other sites between Deming and the border are needed to determine the southern limit of distribution of this ware. The unusually fine quality of decoration in this type of pottery persists throughout the entire area covered by the survey; shards from the farthest sites of the Gila and Rio Grande areas showing as excellent technique as those collected throughout the Mimbres area. Indeed if any falling off in quality can be noted, it would appear to be in the shards from Old Town, but along with these of careless technique are others in which the lines are masterfully drawn.

Type 6.

No. 6 includes the typical Casas Grandes polychrome ware (fig. 2) well figured and described by Kidder[4] and also the type bearing one or more meander bands.[5] (fig. 3). Specimens excavated from various sites near Deming are to be found in the collection of Mr. E. D. Osborne of Deming.

These Casas Grandes polychrome shards were found only at the three sites near Deming. It is assumed that they occur at other sites in that vicinity and also farther to the southeast, south and southwest (which we did not find time to visit). There are vague reports of their occurrence at sites farther north, including

that by Bandelier[6] but these are not confirmed by either Hough or Fewkes. The quality of paste differs quite materially from that in the ware from Chihuahua, being usually much harder and heavier. Some of the shards might easily be mistaken for those from the Hopi and Little Colorado area. This difference in quality would seem to indicate that the ware was not brought in from the Casas Grandes region of Chihuahua, but was a local product of materials found within a reasonable distance of the Lower Mimbres Valley.

Type 7.

No. 7 is another distinct type of polychrome ware (fig. 4) first found at various sites on the lower Gila in Arizona and figured by Fewkes.[7] A few specimens have been found at Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, and are describey by Kidder who uses the term "Gila-like vessels." He figures one piece.[8] The Museum - Ledwedge collection contains several specimens, both bowls and ollas. E. D. Osborn of Deming has specimens excavated from sites near Deming.

Shards of this ware were found in varying quantities, and associated with Casas Grandes type shards at the three sites about Deming; in lesser quantity at one Gila site, and predominating at another where no Mimbres black on white bowl shards appeared.

Conclusions

The problem as disclosed by the distribution of these three distinct types of decorated ware is quite complex. We have the apparent meeting, mixing, or succession of the Mimbres culture from the north, the Casas Grandes culture from the south, and the Gila from the west.

The latter two seem to have coalesced in the region about Deming. Whether this was an intrusion on the range of the Mimbres culture, or whether it preceded it or took place long after the other had disappeared can only be determined by more extensive and intensive study of the lower Mimbres area.[9]

Recommendations

The limits of each culture area should be defined by extending the survey (1st) to the headwaters of the Mimbres, the Gila and to all the contiguous tributaries of the Rio Grande in western Sierra County. Bandelier's description of shards found south of Rincon[10] lead to the belief that the Mimbres culture may have spread to the east bank of the Rio Grande. (2nd) South in the lower Mimbres valley to the New Mexico State line, and southwest, through Luna and Hidalgo counties to the extreme southwest corner of New Mexico where numerous sites are reported. Shard collections should be made at all sites, and the relative importance and feasibility of excavation noted.

List of Sites Examined During Preliminary Survey of the Archaeology of Southwestern New Mexico

Mimbres Area

1. Hough. No. 147.[11] Medium size. Now owned and being excavated by Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Cosgrove of Silver City, N. M.

2. Craig Ranch, on Cameron Creek, three miles south of Fort Bayard. The pueblo lies east of the creek on a rocky mesa, 75 feet above the stream, and com-

mands a wonderful view, including Fort Bayard. It was built of rubble and consists of three house groups extending from north to south over a distance of 240 yards. The ruin, so far, has been little disturbed by curio hunters. It is on property acquired by the Chino Copper Company to protect the water supply of the Company at Hurley.

3. Old Thompson Ranch on west side of Mimbres river, below San Lorenzo. Small ruin on north part, now owned by Mrs. Gumm. Walls of adobe, 1 room partly excavated by Dr. Stovall and Museum staff.

4. Old Thompson Ranch, large ruin on south part, now owned by Mr. Galash. Walls of rubble, little excavated.

5. Several small house sites on low mesas beside road on west side of Mimbres River between Thompson Ranch and Sherman.

6. Perrault's Ranch, west side of Mimbres River near Sherman. Examined by Cosgrove and Bloom. Only a few shards found at house site.

7. Cold Springs. Ruins on a low mesa on the east bank of Cold Springs branch 1½ miles above its junction with Hot Springs Creek at Mimbres Hot Springs. These lie within the upper ranch of the N. A. N. Ranch Company. One room, excavated by Dr. R. F. Stovall contained the specimens of pottery and other material presented by him to the Museum of New Mexico.

8. Mimbres Hot Springs, ruins of small house group, nearly effaced, in field just south of Mimbres Hot Springs Hotel.

9. Hot Springs Creek. Site on east bank of creek about one mile below Mimbres Hot Springs, south of the road as it turns and descends to cross the stream. Old Mexican houses standing on site. Only a few shards were found.

10. Swarts. Ruin on west side of river on second bench above bottom lands. Approached by a lane from main road at school house, then north through an orchard. Ruin lies partly in the orchard, but mainly in field to north. Mound is approximately 100 yards long, from north to south with an eastward extension at each end. Rubble construction, not much disturbed by excavation.

11. N. A. N. Ranch. The ruin of rubble construction lies in a field about ¼ mile north of the ranch house, on the east bank of the Mimbres. It is of irregular arrangement, and extends about 110 yards north to south.

12. Pruitt Ranch. (Old Tom Gorman Ranch) Large ruin on west bank of river, of sandstone slab construction. Considerable excavation.

13. Rock House. On road from Dwyer to Faywood. Old, abandoned house on site. Much excavated by picnic parties from Deming.

14. Old Town. Hough No. 165. Fewkes p. 10.[12] Large ruin on high mesa, on east bank of river. Walls of flat sandstone. Much excavated. May have stood two stories high in parts.

15. Ruins of small houses along talus and cave at base of cliff above house ruins, two miles up canyon on coming into Mimbres Valley from west, about two miles below N. A. N. Ranch. School house at fork of road.

16. Pictographs near road between Dwyer and Faywood.

17. Black Mountain. Hough No. 162-164. Fewkes p. 13. Extensive ruin at southwest slope. Walls of adobe with double rows of rubble at base. Erosion of both water and wind has reduced walls nearly to floor level. Floors are exposed in several places. Much excavation.

18. Roseboro Ranch. Site almost obliterated. Walls of adobe. Site had been plowed and scraped by E. D. Osborne.

19. Byron Ranch. Hough No. 167. Fewkes p. 12.

20. Pictographs. Nine miles northeast of Deming. Fewkes p. 16.

Gila Area

21. Metcalf Ranch, on Mangas Creek. House sites almost obliterated. Few shards. The Metcalfs have found pottery exposed by cutting of stream into bank at that point.

22. Woodrow Ranch. The large ruin lies upon a mesa, on the west bank of the Gila, six miles above Cliff. It is practically untouched and should be preserved by the U. S. Forest Service, as it lies just within the Gila National Forest.

23. "Pottsville" Ruin. Named by Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Cosgrove because of the great quantity of shards on surface. Lies on west bank of Duck Creek, five miles above Cliff. Walls of adobe and rubble.

24. Mesa Ruin. One mile below "Pottsville" and four above Cliff. On west bank of Duck Creek.

Rio Grande Area

25. Berenda Creek. House sites reported about five miles above Lake Valley. We missed these by taking wrong road and came into the Berenda valley above them.

26. Above sites 25, at first point where the road dips down near the creek bed, with outcrop of rock at right (north), and about one-fourth mile below (east) of first

gap in Black Range. House site on low ridge north of creek about 200 feet from road.

27. Small house site a half mile farther up Berenda Creek, through the first gap in the Black Range. On a level bench on southwest side of stream, just above a ranch house. Walls of rubble.

28. Small house sites on Animas Creek near Animas school house, district No. 5. On main road between Hillsboro and San Marcial.

Other Drainage Areas

29. Small house sites, between Silver City and Lordsburg.

Types of pottery, as determined by shard collections from Black Moutain, Roseboro, and Byron Ranch sites near Deming, which do not appear at Casas Grandes, Chihuahua.

Type 3. Coarse red-brown with black decoration.

Type 4. Black on white ollas.

Type 5. Mimbres black on white bowls. (10% at Bryon Ranch).

Types of pottery from Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, not found in the shard collections from the three sites near Deming:

1. Smooth black ware.
2. Red ware, with black decoration.
3. Red ware with geometric decoration in black, outlined with incised lines.
4. Polychrome ware, with red and black decoration on whitish slip of soft, chalky substance which scales off easily, and effaces the red and black decoration. Most

of the culls in the Ledwedge collection are of this type.

5. Tan or red ware, with small figures of serpent or frog applied to exterior surface.

6. Effigy jars.

1. Walter Hough, "Antiquities of the Upper Gila and Salt River Valleys in Arizona and New Mexico." Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 35, p. 80 and Pl. X, fig. 1.

2. J. Walter Fewkes, "Archaeology of the Lower Mimbres Valley, New Mexico." Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 63, No. 10, p. 8.

3. A. V. Kidder, in his "Explorations in Southeastern Utah, in 1908" (American Journal of Archaeology, 2nd. Series, Vol. XIV, No. 3) referring to potsherds subjected to great heat in the conflagration of a granary uncovered in the excavation of Alkali Ridge Ruin, says (p. 348): "Fragments of black-and-white pottery had been burned to a reddish yellow color, the black paint becoming a rich brick red."

4. A. V. Kidder, "The Pottery of the Casas Grandes District, Chihuahua." Holmes Anniversary Volume, 1916, Pl. II, figs. 10 and 11.

5. Ibid., Pl. V, fig. 8.

6. A. F. Bandelier, Final Report, Part 2, 1892, p. 350.

7. J. Walter Fewkes, "Two Summers' Work in Pueblo Ruins." Bureau of American Ethnology, 22nd. Annual Report, Part 2, Pl. LXVIII.

8. Ibid., Plate II, fig. 3, and p. 266.

9. Dr. A. V. Kidder, who has since visited the region, (Mch. 1922) spent a few hours in continuing the excavation of a room which we found partially excavated at the time of our survey. He reports that the adobe walls were made of mud plentifully strewn with shards of Mimbres black on white bowls, while Gila shards abounded in the debris of the room itself. This would indicate a sequence in occupation of the site, the Gila following the Mimbres.

10. Ibid., p. 347.

11. Ibid. Hough gave numbers to 174 sites mentioned in his report. Three others are referred to in this list.

12. This and the three following page numbers refer to descriptions of sites by Fewkes (Note 3).

Table No. 1.

Based upon a comparative study of Potsherds, collected at sites in the Mimbres, Gila and Rio Grande Areas, Jan. and Feb. 1922, 13 of the 30 sites examined are included in this table.

	MIMBRES								GILA				RIO GRANDE	
TYPES OF DECORATED POTTERY	Hough No. 147	Craig Ranch	Thompson Ranch	N. A. N. Ranch	Old Town	Black Mountain	Roseboro Ranch	Byron Ranch	Woodrow Ranch	Metcalf Ranch	Mesa Ruin Duck Creek	"Pottsville" Duck Creek	Berenda Creek
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1. Red with black decoration			1				6						
2. Red with white ext. decoration												4	
3 Coarse red-brown, black decoration				1	1	5	12	30					
4. Black on white, exterior decoration, interior rough scraped.	2	2	9	9	9	20	22	20	4	3	15	5	10
5. Mimbres black on white bowls	96	96	90	90	90			10	96	97	70		90
6. Casas Grandes, 95% has exterior decoration						30	30	20				1	
7. Gila polychrome, 50% bowls, 50% ollas						45	30	20			15	90	

Note: Total of less than 100% indicates presence of types not yet classified.

MUSEUM EVENTS

February Exhibits

The Modernists spread into two alcoves this month. One of these is filled entirely with water colors and one charcoal drawing, while the other has the usual change of paintings. But not merely in quantity but also in quality is the exhibit the most noteworthy, perhaps, thus far hung by the group.

Miss Blanche Grant of Taos, is given an entire alcove for eleven paintings that emphasize the romantic and colorful side of life in Taos. The list of paintings is as follows:

1. The Chief.
2. Where Indians Dance.
3. To-la-pa-la (Sun Lighting.)
4. Evening at the Pueblo, Taos.
5. Canyon Color.
6. On the Highway Out of Taos.
7. The Oven.
8. Climbing Mountains.
9. Spirit of the Aspens.
10. Morning Visitor in Taos.
11. Taos Valley.

Prints and drawings by Russell Natt, whose death in Texas was lately reported, are exhibited and bring out the fine, poetic quality of his work.

R. Frederick Edman exhibits a number of landscapes and there are also several worth while single canvasses by local artists.

Concert Recital

John L. Nelson carried the entire program of the recital at the St. Francis Auditorium last Sunday after-

noon. Despite the handicap of a cold, he sang and played well, giving an instructive as well as entertaining musical hour devoted to folk music. In his running comment he differentiated between true folk music and music composed in folk-style. He went back six and seven centuries to the troubadours of Aquitaine and the Minnesingers of Germany and dispelled the prevailing notion that the terms were equivalent, putting the Minnesingers on a higher plane than the singers of southern France. Here again he distinguished between the songs of Walther von der Vogelweide, typical and first of the Minnesingers, and the songs composed by Wagner and woven into his operas. He then proceeded to give examples of folk songs as well as songs such as the Marseillaise which became ingrained into the popular music. Mr. Nelson expressed a preference for the folksongs of Sweden and sang these soulfully. However, Scotch, Welsh, Spanish, French, Italian, and other national folk songs passed in review by example, making the recital one of real delight.

AMERICAN INDIANS

Use of Cat-Tails by Arikaras

The humble cat-tail of the marshes cut an important figure in old Indian days, according to Dr. Melvin R. Gilmore, of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation. In various tribes, every member of the Indian family depended on this abundant and picturesque plant to fill some need. The Arikara tribe, which lived on the upper Missouri River in what is now North Dakota, called the cat-tail tsiri-tsinu, meaning eye-inflammation. This uncomplimentary name was bestowed in memory of uncomfortable times when the light, downy

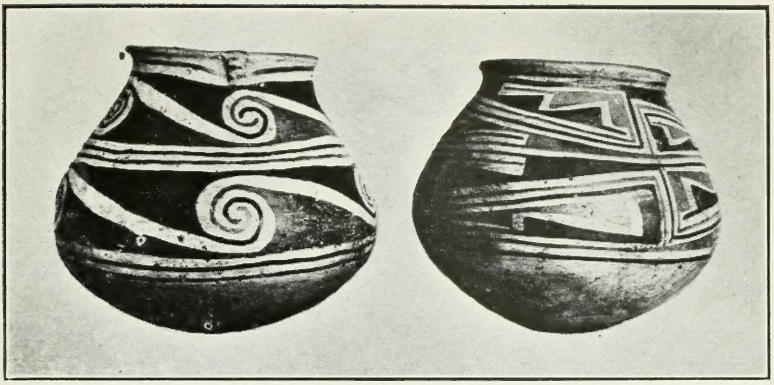

Fig. 3. Casas Grandes Jars.

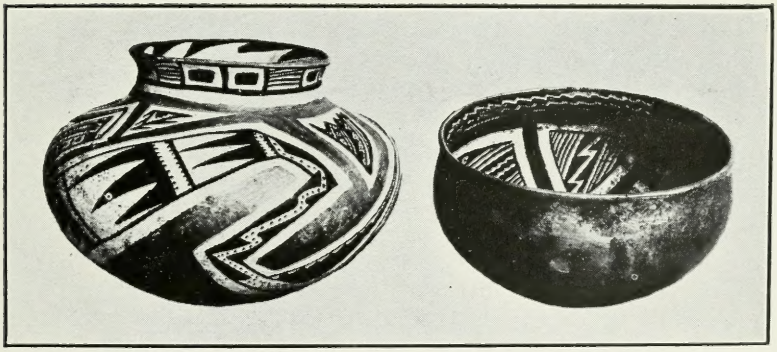

Fig. 4. Gila Jar and Bowl.

seeds of the plant were blown into their eyes by the wind. All the women of a family helped the mother of a baby to gather a supply of cat-tails for lining the baby's cradle, Dr. Gilmore states. The children played games with the plaited leaves, and with the cat-tail clubs which filled the air with flying down, as in modern pillow-fights. The rootstocks were dug up for use as food because of their rich, agreeable taste. And when the cat-tail heads were just ripe they were gathered and used in dressing tanned deerskins.

AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

Indian Chronology by Tree Stumps

The stump of a cedar tree that grew up out of an Indian shell heap at Ritchie Point, B. C., has testified to the antiquity of the Indians who once lived there. A preliminary count of rings in a cross section of the stump shows 325 annual rings, without counting the heart rot or the closely crowded outer rings, according to Harlan I. Smith, archaeologist, of National Museum of Canada. The Indians who tossed clam and mussel shells from innumerable dinners on the kitchen dump heap must have lived before the coming of the Europeans to this country, it is concluded. Their exact age cannot be set because it is impossible to determine how long after they left the place the treee began to grow on the rubbish pile. Several trees growing over Indian remains have been used in this way to set the minimum limit on the age of northwestern Indians, and the heaps are thus proved to be at least three or four hundred years old. Some, however, may be centuries older, perhaps preceding the Christian era, Mr. Smith says, and unless geological evidence comes to the rescue there is little chance of learning the true dates when these old American settlements flourished.